THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Exports of tea during the last three years have been as under:—

Year	Export	
	Qty. (Mn. kg.)	Value (Rs. crores)
1992-93	180.69	1058.70
1993-94*	161.17	1080.10
1994-95* (April-Jan.)	130.09	780.71

*Estimated

Source : (Tea Board)

(b) The public agencies exporting tea to various countries are:

(1) Tea Trading Corporation of of India Ltd.

(2) Andrew Yuls & Co.

(3) Balmer Lawris & Co.

(4) West Bengal Tea Development Corporation Ltd.

(5) Tamil Nadu Tea Plantation Corporation Ltd.

Investments hampered by corruption in the Country

3097. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether government's attention has been invited to the editorial published in the "Financial Express" of the 19th January, 1995 in which it has been reported that the U.S. Commerce Secretary during his. recent visit sought an assurance from the Prime Minister on matters of corruption in the country: if so, what are the details and what has been Government's reaction thereto; and

(b) whether in recent months Government have seen wide comments in the press that the rampant corruption has been creating problems in the flow of investments in the country; if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Mr. Ronald H. Brown, US Secretary for Commerce called on the Prime Minister on 17.1.1993. The Record of Discussions does not contain any reference to the issue of corruption.

(b) No specific instance of alleged corruption leading to problems in the flow of investments into the country has come to Government's notice.

Free Trade Zones in the Country

3098. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many free trade zones are functioning in the country;

(b) whether Government is considering establishing more free trade zones during 1995-96 and if so, which are the places; and

(c) what is the total exports from free trade zones in the country and the percentage to the total exports

the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Seven Export Processing Zones are presently functioning in the country.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Exports from the EPZs during 1994-95 was Rs. 2628 Crores (Prov). EPZs accounted for about 3 per cent of the total manufactured exports from the country in 1993-94.

Impact of import of Edible Oils on farming sector

3099. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 83 given in the Rajya Sabha on 20th March, 1995 and state:

(a) what would be the impact of the Policy of free import of edible oils on Indian farmers producing oilseeds;

(b) whether any assessment has been made of negative impact on Indian farming sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Keeping in view the levels of prevailing international and domestic prices of edible oils and the domestic demand, it is unlikely that there will be any adverse impact on the farmers producing oilseeds on account of import of edible oils.

Information with tobacco board regarding opposition to anti tobacco Legislation

3100. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA KAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tobacco Board has received information on the joint representation of various Central Trade Unions oDDnsing the proposed anti-tobacco legislation;

(b) what steps Tobacco Board has taken to study the negative enects of such legislation on tobacco formers; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Tobacco Board discussed the proposed legislation with representatives of tobacco exporters, cigarette industry, Tobacco Institute of India and some members of Parliament and recommended that an Export Committee be constituted by the Government to examine its imrlicstions. It was also suggested that the legislation may be kept in abeyance till the Committee finalises its recommendations.

Market for Tobacco in Middle East and Africa

3101. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Tobacco Board has explored possibility of new markets in the Middle East and Africa;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is good potential for Indian Tobacco in new countries; and

(c) what steps did Tobacco Board initiate to assist increase of exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Both the Middle East and Afaica are potential markets for increasing exports of Indian tobacco and tobacco products.

(c) Steps taken by the Tobacco Board to promote axports *inter -alia* include, extending long term credit to some countries in these regions, sponsoring trade delegations and